

3.18 Relationship Between Short-term Uses of the Environment and Long-term Productivity

Construction of the Build Alternative for SR 167 would result in local short-term impacts and uses of resources, while providing long-term transportation improvements consistent with local and regional land use and transportation plans. The long-term productivity of the land as farmland will be lost, but that impact will occur even under the No Build Alternative because of the zoning on the properties.

Short-term environmental impacts related to project construction include construction jobs, construction-related noise and dust, traffic delays from temporary road closures and detours, and increased soil erosion potential.

Landscaping and erosion control measures will be implemented during and after roadway construction. While native plant species may be used in project landscaping, there will be a long-term change in vegetation types from existing conditions, particularly in areas presently in active agricultural use.

There is a potential for short-term effects on Hylebos Creek, Surprise Lake Drain, Wapato Creek, and other streams in the vicinity of project construction. Mitigation measures to relocate Hylebos Creek and Surprise Lake Drain, to protect streams from highway runoff pollutants, and to replace flood storage lost to roadway fills will result in no major impact to water quality and aquatic life and should improve long-term productivity of these systems.

The proposed riparian restoration proposal will provide stormwater flow control and reduce the need for conventional flow control BMPs. In addition, it has the potential for both positive and negative impacts to wildlife species. The most notable positive benefit of the plan is the protection and restoration of a fairly large contiguous block of land in an urbanized setting. The proposal will increase the ability of wildlife to travel in a north-south direction along Hylebos Creek, but will result in an impediment to east-west travel due to most of the freeway extension being placed on fill instead of bridge structure. The proposal will restore floodplains with riparian vegetation along the lower Hylebos Creek, Surprise Lake Drain, and Wapato Creek, and address many of the factors which limit salmon and trout recovery including altered hydrology, lack of riparian forests, loss of stream complexity and large woody debris in the channels, lack of juvenile salmon rearing areas, and increases in stream temperature.

Impacts to both Hylebos Creek and Surprise Lake Drain will be mitigated by relocating portions of the streams into approximately 9,350 lineal feet (4,010 lf Hylebos Creek and 5,340 lf Surprise Lake Drain) of natural sinuous channel within the large buffer provided through the riparian restoration proposal. These relocations will have associated impacts, such as temporary sedimentation, that generally will be short-term (until the new channel reaches equilibrium). The baseline condition of the creeks will be improved by the meandering of the new streambeds, thereby increasing the overall channel length and capacity. The creek and its tributary will be restored to a more natural condition, rather than a ditched, straightened channel. In addition, four county road crossings, one I-5

crossing, and a private crossing will be eliminated and replaced with crossings designed to meet current Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife fish passage criteria.

Construction of the Build Alternative will have the short-term effect of relocating residences, farms, and businesses. However, the project is consistent with regional and local land use and transportation plans. The project will result in more efficient vehicle movements through the area and enhance the area's long-term productivity. Higher average operating speeds on the area's roadway will reduce delays and fuel use. The project will complement the Port of Tacoma's 20-year development plan by providing a high speed, high capacity connection to the region's freeway system.

Provisions of new access, particularly in the vicinity of new interchanges with local arterials, will result in a short-term increase in the development of commercial and industrial properties. There may be a slight decrease in the value of residential properties adjacent to the right-of-way (ROW), although land values may increase if the residential structure is located on commercially-zoned property.

There may be some short-term reduction in property tax revenues because of the loss of residential and commercial properties. Property tax loss will be offset during the construction phase by sales taxes from construction spending. In the long term, increased commercial and industrial development resulting from completion of the Puyallup valley freeway system will probably result in an overall increase in tax revenues.